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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1426
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 4211
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2023
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1888
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 2459
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 2820
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASHGABAT 001121

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN;

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: CHINESE OIL COMPANY PROVIDES JOBS,
BUT LOCALS STILL WARY OF GROWING CHINESE INFLUENCE

CLASSIFIED BY: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES SYLVIA REED CURRAN FOR
REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. The Chinese National Petroleum Company (CNPC) is developing a series of natural gas drilling and refinery complexes around Turkmenabat, near the Turkmen-Uzbek border. These complexes do not allow visitors without prior Chinese embassy approval. A Turkmen worker at a regional headquarters revealed that while Turkmen receive good wages, the jobs do not offer career advancement or educational opportunities in China. Many still hope to study or work in the United States. In the city, locals appreciate the new jobs but are still wary of Chinese influence. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) As envisioned under its production sharing agreement with the Government of Turkmenistan, CNPC is developing a series of natural gas drilling and refinery complexes in the Farap region (on the right bank of the Amu Darya River) outside of Turkmenabat City, near the Turkmen-Uzbek border. The Chinese company has opened an office in the city itself. A constant stream of trucks can be seen hauling building materials from Uzbekistan, Turkmenabat, and quarries around Ashgabat.

¶3. (C) Emboff visited a CNPC management and housing complex 100km north of Turkmenabat. The Chinese director of the facility was reticent and would not discuss anything without prior approval from the Chinese Embassy. Emboff was not allowed to continue past a checkpoint another 25km away that led to a refinery still under construction.

¶4. (C) Mr. Rozmuradov, a Turkmen guard at the CNPC management quarters, asked Emboff about educational opportunities in the United States. Despite the (by Turkmen standards) good wages he was receiving working for the Chinese, he felt that only an education in the United States would allow him to truly improve the status of his family. He pointed out that the Chinese generally do not offer Chinese language courses or opportunities for travel and education in China.

¶5. (C) Turkmen workers at the CNPC facilities earn roughly

\$350 a month. Drivers can earn \$700-800 a month, but need to use their own vehicles. Most Turkmen living in Turkmenabat appreciate the new jobs CNPC has brought to the city. However, many remain wary of the Chinese and reluctant to allow too much Chinese investment into the country.

¶6. (C) COMMENT: While Turkmen eagerly apply for CNPC's jobs which feature good pay and consistent employment, most Turkmenabat residents with whom we spoke seem to believe that the Turkmen government should take care not to allow too much Chinese influence. Nevertheless, the fact that CNPC has managed to sign a series of new, large-scale contracts with the Turkmen government means that the Chinese are here to stay. END COMMENT.

CURRAN